

Project Abstract

Project Title: The Massachusetts Evidence-Based Home Visiting Program (MEBHVP)

Applicant Name: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH)

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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the State Title V Agency, is submitting an application in response the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program for \$1,096,728. DPH is the state agency designated by the Governor to apply for and administer these funds for Massachusetts. To this end, DPH, in collaboration with state partners, will complete a statewide needs assessment that will identify communities with high rates of poor perinatal, infant, child health and development outcomes; poverty; unemployment; crime; domestic violence; child maltreatment; substance abuse; and poor educational outcomes. All 351 Massachusetts communities will be stratified and rank ordered from highest to lowest risk based on these indicators. This community ranking system will be used to underscore regional disparities in health status and identify communities with the greatest need for home visiting services.

The needs assessment will also identify the quality and capacity of existing programs and initiatives for perinatal and early childhood home visiting in the state, and the extent to which such efforts meet the needs of eligible families. A survey of all programs will gather and summarize program elements including models, goals, outcomes, training and supervision, and populations and communities served. This survey of programs will be matched against needs to identify gaps in service.

Finally, the needs assessment will include the state's capacity for providing substance abuse services to individuals and families building on an extensive evaluation and strategic plan developed by the DPH Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS).

A Home Visiting Task Force with senior level leadership from multiple state agencies and representatives from the state Title V Agency including BSAS, Title II of CAPTA Agency, Headstart Collaboration, welfare agency, Medicaid agency, and child protective agency is providing guidance for the needs assessment. This group will develop recommendations to the governor on strategies for developing a system of home visiting. A Workgroup, consisting of a multi-disciplinary and interagency team with backgrounds in epidemiology, biostatistics, home visiting, health care, maternal and child health, child welfare, and early childhood education, is charged with developing a work plan, completing the needs assessment and summarizing information for the Task Force. The needs assessment process will also include public input through community engagement including meetings with key stakeholders in the home visiting arena.